



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

09/343,929

06/30/1999

THOMAS STUERMER

GE998-005

8482

7590

07/14/2004

OWEN J GAMON  
IBM CORPORATION DEPT 917  
3605 HIGHWAY 52 NORTH  
ROCHESTER, MN 559017829

EXAMINER

EDOUARD, PATRICK NESTOR

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2654

5

DATE MAILED: 07/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/343,929

Applicant(s)

STUERMER, THOMAS

Examiner

Patrick N. Edouard

Art Unit

2654

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 6-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 6-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to communication filed 4/29/04 (paper#4). Claims 1-3, 6-9 and new claims 10-16 are pending.

*Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3, 6-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masegi (5,369,574).

As per claim 1, Masegi et al teach a method for the automatic generation of a textual expression from a semantic representation, comprising the computer executed steps of ( figures 2 and 7):

“Building a statistical model from a plurality of pre-determined pairs of semantic representations and associated expressions” (figure 2, col. 5, lines 14 to col. 7, lines 41, col. 9, lines 10-14, his limitation storing unit 408);

“wherein the building step further comprises determine which information in an external format is present in a negative list and which information is present in the external format is absent in the negative list,(suggested by Masegi at col. 7, line 3 to col. 10, line 49);and

“Producing a first associated expression from a first semantic representation using the statistical model” ( col. 9, lines 10-14).

Masegi et al teach the claimed invention but does not explicitly teach wherein the negative list describe information in the external format that is irrelevant to the statistical model. However, Masegi et al teach at col. 9, lines 10-15, a limitation storing unit 408 that stored the limitations which means restricting the direction of selection performed during the process, and also the sentence is not changed to an interrogative sentence or imperative sentence if it is explanatory. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to recognize that the limitation storing unit 408 of Masegi could also stored a negative list that is irrelevant to the generation process because it would improve the performance of the system in a user’s particular application.

As per claim 2, Masegi et al teach wherein the building step further comprises converting the pairs of semantic and associated expressions from the external format into an internal format (col. 7, lines 2-41).

As per claim 3, Masegi et al teach wherein the converting step further uses a negative list and translation table (table 2, col. 7, line 3-41, col. 8, lines 58 to col. 10, line 48).

As per claim 7-9, Masegi et al teach determining a plurality of questions (col. 6, line 1-58);

“Classifying the information in the internal format using the plurality of questions” (table 1); and calculating the statistical model from the internal format using the plurality of questions ( col. 7, line 2 to col. 10, line 49).

As per claim 6, Masegi et al teach determining which information in the external format is present in the negative list and converting information that is absent in the negative list (read on table 2 that describes all the limitations necessary for converting a semantic representation to a sentence). It is noted that Masegi et al teach the claimed invention but does not explicitly teach refraining from converting information that is present in the negative list. However, this feature is well known in the art. Therefore, one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to recognize because only the limitations described in table 2 should be used to generate a sentence from a semantic representation, no other limitation (i.e. negative list) would be used because it would provide a sentence generating system capable of generating easy to read sentences at a high speed.

4. Claims 10-16 are the same in scope and content as claims 1-3, 6-9 above and therefore are rejected under the same rationale.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patrick N. Edouard whose telephone number is 7033086725. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F 7:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richemond Dorvil can be reached on 703 3059645. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Patrick N. Edouard

July 8, 2004



**PATRICK N. EDOUARD**  
**PATENT EXAMINER**